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ON PAGE 9-APHILADELPHIA INQUIRER
13 February 1985

Ex-CIA man says Casey blocked some data on political grounds

By Alfonso Chardy
Inquirer Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON — A top intelligence analyst who resigned after CIA Director William J. Casey altered one of his secret reports on Mexico contends that Casey and Pentagon officials consistently reject analyses for political reasons.

In a magazine article, John Horton said Casey dismissed his estimate of the number of Cuban soldiers on Grenada — an estimate later verified by the U.S. forces that invaded the Caribbean island nation — because it did not support the administration's view.

Horton also accused a senior Pentagon official of rewriting a military analyst's report on weaknesses in the Salvadoran armed forces, and he contended that the administration was involved in a series of intelligence failures — including the Grenada invasion, and the mining of Nicaraguan harbors — that he said the intelligence community would have advised against had it been asked.

Horton was a top CIA operations officer from 1948 to 1975. In 1983 and

1984 he was chief Latin America officer for the National Intelligence Council, which prepares foreign intelligence estimates.

The article, in this month's issue of Foreign Service Journal, is Horton's first written comment on the CIA since he resigned last year, although he had been interviewed about the resignation.

Horton wrote that Casey was critical of the Grenada estimate because it minimized the size of the Cuban forces on the island and did not support the administration contention that the airport the Cubans were building there would be used for military purposes.

The United States had asserted that there were more than 1,000 Cubans on the island, but Cuba said there were 786, most of them construction workers. Horton's estimate agreed with Havana's and contradicted U.S. assertions that the discrepancy was due to many Cubans hiding in the hills.

Intelligence officials, meeting on the Sunday after the October 1983 invasion, "finally concluded that no one remained in the hills," Horton

wrote. But the next day, "a person with some responsibility in the [intelligence] community, although not himself an intelligence officer, asked to read the assessment. Later ... he said, 'I think it stinks.' ... I went to see Casey as soon as I could. He was less abrupt, merely finding it 'unimaginative.'"

"I can only suppose that the assessment was 'unimaginative' because of what it did not say. For example, we could have said that the Cuban construction workers were actually combat troops in disguise, or that the arms found in Grenada were destined to be used to overthrow friendly governments elsewhere in the Caribbean, or that the airfield was not for tourism but for Soviet reconnaissance aircraft."

Horton also wrote that a confidential study prepared last year by a military analyst was rewritten by a Pentagon official because it "contained a discussion of the Salvadoran armed forces' weaknesses." While not identifying the official, Horton said he was "heavily involved in supporting the armed forces of El Salvador."

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WASHINGTON POST
13 February

Analyses' Rejection Called Political

Knight-Ridder

A top intelligence analyst who quit the Central Intelligence Agency after Director William J. Casey altered one of his secret reports on Mexico contends that Casey and Pentagon officials consistently reject analyses for political reasons.

In a magazine article, John Horton said Casey dismissed his estimate of the number of Cuban soldiers on Grenada—later verified by the U.S. forces that invaded the island in October 1983—because it did not support the administration's hard-line views on the Cubans.

Horton also accused a senior Pentagon official of rewriting a mil-

itary analyst's report on weaknesses in the Salvadoran armed forces and charged the administration with a string of intelligence failures, including the Grenada invasion and the mining of Nicaraguan harbors, which he said the intelligence community would have advised against had it been asked.

Horton, a top CIA operations officer from 1948 to 1975 who was chief Latin America officer in 1983 and 1984 for the National Intelligence Council, which prepares foreign intelligence estimates, made his accusations in this month's Foreign Service Journal.

The article accuses Casey of disapproving the Grenada estimate be-

cause it minimized the number of Cuban forces on the island and did not support administration claims that the Cuban-built airport there would be used for military purposes.

Horton also wrote that a confidential study prepared by a military analyst in 1984 was rewritten by a Pentagon official because it "contained a discussion of the Salvadoran armed forces' weaknesses." Horton said the official was "heavily involved in supporting the armed forces of El Salvador."

The revision, Horton charged, was typical of the practice of some administration officials to suppress internal discussion of tough issues.

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MIAMI HERALD
13 February 1985

Casey rejected Grenada report, former CIA analyst says

Around the Americas

By ALFONSO CHARDY
Herald Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON — The former CIA analyst who charged that Director William Casey altered a secret report on Mexico now says that Casey also rejected a report on Cuban troop strength in Grenada at the time of the U.S.-led invasion.



Former CIA agent John Horton, writing for the February issue of Foreign Service journal, blames the Reagan administration for a string of intelligence failures, among them the Grenada invasion itself and the mining of Nicaraguan harbors.

Both the CIA and the Pentagon declined comment on Horton's allegations. But administration sources familiar with CIA procedure denied the validity of his claims that officials alter intelligence information to conform to policy.

Horton, a CIA operations officer from 1948 to 1975, served in 1983-84 as the chief Latin American officer for the agency's National Intelligence Council, responsible for preparing foreign intelligence estimates.

Horton left the CIA last year, claiming that Casey had altered one of his reports to suggest that strife in Central America could create turmoil in Mexico.

In his Journal article, *The Real Intelligence Failure*, Horton charged that Casey disapproved a Grenada report he prepared shortly after the Oct. 25, 1983, invasion

because it did not give a high enough estimate of the number of Cubans on the island and did not support administration claims that Grenada's Cuban-built airport had a military purpose.

The CIA had assigned Horton and other analysts to calculate the number of Cubans in Grenada to reconcile differing U.S. and Cuban estimates. The United States claimed there were more than 1,000 Cubans on the island and Cuba counted 786, mostly construction workers.

Cuba's figure turned out to be correct, and Horton said his estimate not only supported the Cuban claim, but contradicted the U.S. contention that many Cubans were hiding in Grenada's hills.

"The Sunday after the invasion," Horton wrote, "members of the intelligence community found themselves sitting around a table in Washington, assigned with the task of arriving at a meaningful number [of Cuban troops]. We finally concluded that no one remained in the hills."

"Some officials," however, found "a serious fault," he said. One person "with some responsibility... although not himself an intelligence officer" read the report and said "I think it stinks." Knowing him to be close to CIA Director William Casey, I went to see Casey as soon as I could. He was less abrupt, merely finding it "unimaginative."

"I can only suppose that the assessment was 'unimaginative' because of what it did not say," Horton wrote. "For example, we could have said that the Cuban construction workers were actually combat troops in disguise, or that the arms found in Grenada were destined to be used to overthrow friendly governments elsewhere in the Caribbean, or

that the airfield was not for tourism but for Soviet reconnaissance aircraft."

Horton said the "need for security and the quite justified obsession with leaks" may have led policymakers to limit participation in intelligence debate, thereby result-

ing in bad policies. He said the decision to mine Nicaraguan ports last year was made by senior policymakers without consulting professional intelligence officers who might have advised against it.

One administration source familiar with the CIA criticized

Horton's description of the agency's internal workings, saying the former analyst had portrayed as conflict "the normal tension of the give-and-take between analysts and policymakers."

Congressional sources briefed by the CIA on the Horton resignation said Casey revised the Mexico assessment not to fit policy, but to give an early warning of possible trouble there as a result of Central America's conflicts.